

**Park Commission Meeting  
April 13, 2009 (amended)**

**Present:** Bob Christiansen, Bill Gardiner, Mike Interbartolo, Joan Bell, Frank Olivieri, Cindy Brickley, Mike Farrell, Phil Friel and Tom Friel

**I INTERVIEWS FOR FEASIBILITY STUDY**

The Park Commissioners previously shortened the list of companies that had Submitted qualifications for the feasibility study to be done at Mt. Hood. The following 3 companies were brought in and interviewed.

- A. Beals & Thomas (John Thomas and Robert Weidknecht)  
Based out of Southborough.
- B. Allan & Major (Robert Clarke and Jen Hamwey)  
Based out of Woburn.
- C. Coler & Colantonio Inc. (Dale Harris and Kelly Killeen)  
Based out of Norwell

**II SIGNING OF WARRANTS**

Warrants were reviewed and signed.

**Motion:** By Bill Gardiner to go to Public Participation

**Second:** John McLaughlin

**Vote:** Unanimous

**III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

A. Concession Stand – Lions Club

Kevin Erb, president of Lions Club, Brad Hutchinson, past president of Lions Club and Keith Bowden, active member of Lions Club, presented the Recreation Revolving Account with a check for \$2,270.76, the net proceeds from their manning the Concession Stand during varsity boys and girls basketball games. The proceeds will be dispersed 50/50 to the Lions Club and the Melrose High School Athletic Fund. Many thanks for a job well done.

B. Dog Park

Diane Kurkian, Melrose Canine Control Officer, presented the proposal for a Dog Park. She feels it will curtail some of the existing dog issues that she deals with day to day. Really need to have a good user group. She feels the group which has formed is very good and wants to support them. Would like to know what the process is for the group to go forward. There are 1300 licensed dogs in Melrose. Diane feels there are really approximately 5000 dogs in total in Melrose. The group is applying for a nonprofit status which will help them in the future.

Tom McGuire, 4 Cherry St, agrees that a good user group is definitely necessary. He has visited other parks and can tell which ones have good user groups. He believes a dog park will force many to license their dogs.

Greg Penta, 183 Trenton St, stated other ideas that the group is looking into, education, green dog proposal, canine bird chasers, etc. He said that the group started

because the mayor was getting a lot of calls from Horace Mann area about the irresponsible dog owners that were using the Hesseltine Park as a dog park. The group would like the committee's suggestions. The group likes the Tremont St sight. Erin Door, 122 Derby Rd, described why they like the Tremont St location. The group really wants to open the floor for the Park Commission's opinions and suggestions.

Ellen Steward, 325 Swains Pond Ave, added that the user group is very committed and has continued to grow, showing the interest that there is.

Greg Penta, noted that there is a huge social component to a dog park. The location is important, because of safety.

Mike I. responded that he was not expecting the recommendation of one site tonight. The group responded they were not set on one site, but they are trying to trouble shoot and find their own site. Mike I. suggests that the group should outreach to groups around the sites they are interested in. For instance, let them know that there would be a 20' buffer between the little league outfield fence and a fence for the dog park. This would make a group meeting much easier. Mike I. directed Joan B to give the dog group a list of abutters to any areas they are interested in. The dog group would like to concentrate on the Tremont St. site right now. John McLaughlin feels that an area near organized athletics will receive a lot of opposition.

#### C. Membership Request

John Lynch, Saugus, a member of the Saugus Watershed Council, steward of the Saugus River was very happy to be able to purchase a membership at Mt. Hood years ago. During his time as a member he feels he has collected more trash than anyone else. He feels he should be entitled to the same membership price as a Melrose resident. Mike I. feels it should be GMC's responsibility to pick up the membership discount. They are responsible for keeping the course clean. Phil Friel agrees that it is GMC's responsibility to keep the course clean. John Lynch disagrees as he also cleans outside of the course's boundaries. The Park Commission feels this is not a request they can grant.

#### D. Fire Department – Carnival Request

John Sands, 54 Albert St, president of the Melrose Relief Association, would like to request use of the Knoll for a carnival during April vacation. They are working with Cushing Entertainment.

**Motion:** By Bill Gardiner to approve carnival request pending an insurance binder for the records at the Park Department.

**Second:** John McLaughlin

**Vote:** Unanimous

E. Ralph Sarni, 75 Altamont Ave, requested to speak with GMC about the tree plantings on the second hole. GMC, Ralph and Joan discussed the issue.

- F. Myran Ditmar, presented the commission with an agenda of items that the Mt. Hood Association would like to touch on in the future. He definitely would like to be involved in the Feasibility Study once the company has been picked.

#### IV. RECREATION DEPARTMENT REPORT

A. Status Report on Revolving Fund Account FY09

Netted almost \$19,000 on MBA. Frank noted that 12-15 scholarships were given out this past year. John McLaughlin suggests to raise the cost of the MBA program.

B. General Recreation Department Report

Babysitting course is running this weekend. It should net \$800-\$1000. Frank is about \$1100 short of covering his salary(not including benefits) Mike I. would like to see the scholarships listed on Franks budget before he goes to the BOA Budget hearing.

C. MBA Evaluations

300 were handed out. 850 participated in the program. 185 returned the evaluations. After a rough look at the evaluations there is an 85% or so satisfaction rate. Mike I. would like a summary of the written pieces of the evaluations next meeting.

D. Travel Evaluations

Frank will have the results of these at the next month's meeting. If a policy needs to be set about practice time constraints the Park Commission should set them not the coaches.

E. Volleyball Program

Approximately 50 middle school girls and 15 elementary girls signed up. The league is up and running. The program should net around \$3000.

F. Summer Programs/Staff

Frank has put together a rough draft of summer programs. Frank, Joan and the Mayor met and discussed the summer. The mayor would like the Common, Gooch and Hesseltine to be open and fully staffed from 10-2, Monday through Friday during the summer. This will take 7 park instructors. Frank originally had the idea of scaling back to only one park, doing it really well, and then branching out after the numbers increased. The mayor feels strongly that all 3 parks should be open. Mike I. suggested keeping a log of numbers of kids per day that come to the parks. John McLaughlin and Bill Gardiner feel that Hesseltine should not be opened if it is not used. Frank stated that all the park programs would be less that \$24. The Park Commission would like Frank to carefully track and evaluate park use this summer.

Summer job descriptions will be put on the website this week.

Frank is very hopeful for the tennis program that is being revamped. James Renier is running the tennis program under the Quickstart Program. He has a wide variety of other programs, including arts, music, videography, science, sports, etc.

Mike I. asked Mike F. about the youth league that Mr. Cunningham has run for several years. Mike F. said GMC is discussing ways to prevent it from turning into a babysitting service. One suggestion they have is to make the participants go through a session of the summer school golf program before they can be in the youth league. Mr Cunningham will run it again on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Mike I. would like to receive a copy of the changes that GMC will make to the youth league from Mike F. It is a policy now that jr members can make tee times 24 hours ahead from 10am-3pm.

The George Rogers Tournament has not been discussed since winter. There was a suggestion to do this tournament on the Friday of the Victorian Fair weekend. The Mayor would like to hold 6 or 7 “meet your neighbor” events this summer. Recreation will provide games, slush, etc. He would also like to do 2 music events at the gazebo this summer. The Mayor has a special fund that would pay for them.

G. Spring Events

In May, along with Healthy Alternatives, recreation is doing a teen scavenger hunt.

H. Peak Software Update

The online registration is up and running well! John McLaughlin will help advertise the Navigator program by emailing the little leagues. Joan suggested to get the navigator mascot to Foss Park during “meet your neighbor” night. John McLaughlin suggested that Frank get in touch with Pete Delani to set this up.

I. Report on Recreation Dept. Budget for FY09

1. Recreation Salary FY10

In FY10 Frank will be responsible to cover his whole salary plus benefits under revolving accounts.

2. FY10 budget

Joan reported that the recreation revolving account got passed tonight by the BOA. For FY10 recreation budget is requesting \$20,000 for YMCA Teen Center, and \$3,600 for EMARK. The Teen Center money and the EMARK money comes out of the Mayor’s general fund. Joan would like to see Frank monitor that the Teen Center is being used and worth putting the money into.

V. MOUNT HOOD REPORT

A. Mount Hood

1. Report on membership list for 2009

146 memberships have come in for 2009 for a total \$149,605. At this time in 2008 176 memberships were in for a total of \$182,430. The total memberships were 229 last year. Only have 29 juniors now, last year there were 70. Mike F. has seen large swings. One day they are close to last year, the next day far off. Mike I. needs the membership figures as of May 1 to take to the BOA when he goes to the budget hearing May 7. Mike I. would also like the food and beverage figures comparing this year to last year from GMC for the BOA meeting, May 7.

2. Outstanding Gift Certificates

Total is \$28,000 currently. Last year at this time it was \$24,000.

3. Monthly Financial Report on Golf Course

Golf Revenue report shows that greens fees are up and memberships are down. There are 16 new members. GMC feels a lot of juniors have not joined yet, but will when they come to play.

2009 Total Revenues:

MTD \$180,418.53

YTD \$298,704.24

#### 4. Marketing Plan Update

The new marketing group that GMC has employed to redo their website has many marketing ideas. GMC handed out copies of only several promotions they could possibly offer. They have looked at the soft times and two dates, July 4<sup>th</sup> and during Patriots games stick out. They are thinking of starting the twilight time discount much earlier on these days. They looked at the reason for the low numbers on certain days and are coming up with a plan. One of GMC's pros called pros around the country before they signed up with the marketing company to see what they liked and didn't like for promotions. The unanimous thing was the birthday promotion. A birthday person would bring a group of paying golfers while the birthday person would play for free. Another idea is a 9 hole special deal after outings or after leagues. All advertising will be done by email blasts. Mike asked what a member will get from any promotions. GMC said they possibly could do something on food or drinks for a member, they will think about this. GMC is looking for approval for this type of marketing. Their new website has just gone live today.

**Motion:** By Bob Christiansen approve the "email blast promotions" as described by GMC.

**Second:** Bill Gardiner

**Vote:** Unanimous

#### 5. Report on General Operations of Golf Course

a. Report on staffing

There is currently 6 staff on hand.

b. Copy of Maintenance Log and Current Certification

A copy was submitted and is on file.

c. Update on Feasibility Study

Put off till Joan returns

d. Update on Beverage Cart

Phil F. felt in light of the Mayor's opinion on the beverage cart presented in the local papers recently that it was not good timing to speak with the Mayor on the issue. The Park Commission would like Phil F. to contact the mayor to explain how the beverage cart works at other GMC courses. Meeting should take place before May 7th, when Mike I. goes before the BOA for the budget hearings.

Phil F. will also try to meet with Myran Ditmire to go over the Mt Hood Association's position on the beverage cart again.

Phil said that they estimate \$50,000 - \$60,000 could be expected to be brought in from a beverage cart at Mt Hood.

Mike F. has a list of surrounding courses that have or will have a beverage cart. Mike I. would like this for May 7<sup>th</sup> also.

Yamaha contacted GMC to make them aware that it may be difficult to get a beverage cart if they wait too long.

If tournaments and outings are lost because of no beverage cart, it could be very damaging to the course financials.

e. Update on 19<sup>th</sup> Hole Roof Repair

The project is done. There is still a small leak around the stone. Joan is going to call Pantera back to see if they can somehow seal it. On a side note, Joan has spoken with the company that did the front steps and they are coming back to fix the settling problem and look at the rust problem. Another repair issue- the Police Chief approached Joan and reported that due to broken down fences kids are parking their cars on Plymouth Circle and getting onto the course and drinking. Joan researched all fences at Mt Hood and found 6 areas that need new fences or fences repaired.

**Motion:** By Bob Christiansen to authorize \$3700 from “outside contractors” to be spent on repairs/replacements to Mt Hood fences by Ver-eck.

**Second:** John McLaughlin

**Vote:** Unanimous

Mike I. requests that documentation be kept if a fence is damaged and it should get fixed by the damaging party.

f. Assault on Mt. Hood

The date has been set to December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Inclement weather date, December 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Motion:** By Bob Christiansen to approve the Assault on Mt Hood Race on Dec 12, 2009.

**Second:** John McLaughlin

**Vote:** Unanimous

B. Report on requests for rentals of clubhouse, league play, golf tournaments

Golf tournament requests are up. This does not translate to how many golfers will be in each tournament though. Functions are up about \$20,000. The number of leagues is the same as last year.

C. FY09 Budget

No discussion

D. FY10 Budget

No discussion

A Melrose Mirror reporter approached GMC and would like information on the impact of the economic times on the golf course. Mike I. would like Joan to give the reporter the information.

Mike I. asked where GMC is with the Mountain Bike/Trail Group. The subject of trails came up in the feasibility study company interviews. The two would need to work together. Phil said they are waiting for him(Phil) to get them a map of the existing trails. He plans to start up communications again with the Mountain Bike group

Discussion was had about the Feasibility Study Companies that were previously interviewed.

**Motion:** By John McLaughlin to select Beals & Thomas as the company to do the Mt Hood Feasibility Study subject to references being checked by Joan.

**Second:** Bill Gardiner

**Vote:** Unanimous

Joan requested for the Park Commission's approval to request that \$30,000 be moved into the Mt Hood budget to finish off FY09 payments to GMC. More money is needed because of the "over a certain percentage" payments that had were paid out to GMC. .

## VI. PARK DEPARTMENT REPORT

### A. General Park Dept. Report

#### 1. Girls Youth Softball

The storage boxes will be coming in this weekend and painted by a group of high school kids that Joan has been working with.

### B. Update Mowing and Maintenance Contract

Greenscape was awarded the contract, but asked to be disqualified a week later. The second lowest bidder was GTA and was awarded the contract. Joan will have the contract shortly for the Park Commissioners to sign. GTA is already working and doing a remarkable job. The little league fields have been gone through. The bigger parks are next. Mulch will be done during April vacation. GTA will receive 8 payments. Every month they will provide a report of what was done. Line striping was done in house and got many compliments. Parks provides the first line striping of the season, after that the user group provides it The City bought a line striping machine.

### C. Other Discussion

The dog park was discussed. The Park Commission is not against it. The group should be given the chance to research it. The Park Commission does not feel that the area on Tremont street is a going to work, but will wait for the group to come back with information.

The A.C. plans from R.W. Sullivan were given to Mike I. to look over.

**Motion:** By Bill Gardiner that the sub committee for the Feasibility Study meetings will consist of 2 Park Commissioners (Mike I. and John McLaughlin), 1 GMC representative and staff(Joan and Frank). The committee may be expanded as the picture of what is possible becomes clearer.

**Second:** Bob Christiansen

**Vote:** Unanimous

**Motion:** By Bob Christiansen to approve the minutes of the meeting 1/12/09

**Second:** John McLaughlin

**Vote:** Unanimous

**Motion:** By Bill Gardiner to approve the minutes of the meeting 2/9/09.

**Second:** Bob Christiansen

**Vote:** Unanimous

**Motion:** By John McLaughlin to approve the minutes of the meeting 3/11/09

**Second:** Bill Gardiner

**Vote:** Unanimous

At the BOA tonight \$40,000 was approved for sod to be put in at Morelli and portions of the East and West Knoll.

Republic Electric is going to look at the Morelli lights. They think it is a smaller job than originally thought.

The trench for the wiring of the scoreboard is going to be dug Thursday and the scoreboard will be installed soon after.

**Motion:** By Bill Gardiner to adjourn

**Second:** John McLaughlin

**Vote:** Unanimous